

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 13235

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP

SUBJECT: MARTIAL LAW DAY: A REDEDICATION?

1. IN HARD HITTING SPEECH AT CEREMONIES MARKING THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF MARTIAL LAW, PRESIDENT MARCOS ANALYZED GAINS MADE IN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SECTORS OF PHILIPPINES, ADMITTED THAT MUCH REMAINED TO BE DONE BUT THAT "CREDIBLE" START HAD BEEN MADE.

2. SURPRISE OF DAY CAME, HOWEVER, WHEN PRESIDENT LASHED OUT AT RICH, PRIVILEGED AND POWERFUL IN AND OUT OF GOVT WHO, HE SAID, WERE VIOLATING PUBLIC TRUST. "THERE IS A HIERARCHY OF RESPONSIBILITY, MARCOS SAID, AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO BENEFITTED SO MUCH MUST LEARN TO SERVE THE PEOPLE BETTER." "MANY FILIPINOS BELIEVE THAT WE GOT RID OF ONE OLIGARCHY AND HAVE CREATED ANOTHER. THERE ARE OTHERS, HOWEVER, WHO HAVE REMEMBERED THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THESE WE WILL REWARD."

3. MARCOS THEN ANNOUNCED TO ACCOMPANYMENT OF NERVOUS APPLAUSE, RESIGNATION OF NUMBER OF SENIOR GOVT OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF JUDICIARY INCLUDING AUDIT COMMISSIONER, INTERNAL REVENUE

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COMMISSIONER, CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER, UNDERSECY OF NATIONAL

DEFENSE FOR MUNITIONS SALIENTES, SECY OF PUBLIC WORKS DAVID CONSUNJI, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, ENTIRE BOARD OF TRANSPORTATION, COMMISSIONER OF LAND TRANSPORTATION, SECY OF PUBLIC HIGHWAYS AQUINO, ENTIRE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, DIRECTOR OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY, DIRECTOR OF BUREAU OF FORESTRY, ENTIRE BOARD OF EXAMINERS, CHAIRMAN OF SECURITY AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, NINE SENIOR JUDGES, AND OVER 100 FISCALS.

4. IN ADDITION TO THE RESIGNATIONS, MARCOS ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT OF SEVERAL OVER-AGED OFFICIALS (WHOSE AVERAGE AGE EXCEEDS 70): SECY OF EDUCATION MANUEL, SECY OF HEALTH GATMITAN AND COMMISSIONER OF BUDGET SYCHANGCO. HE FURTHER SINGLED OUT SOLICITOR GENERAL MENDOZA FOR ELEVATION TO CABINET RANK IN RECOGNITION OF HIS EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AND DEDICATION TO NEW SOCIETY PRINCIPLES.

5. "THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING, MARCOS SAID, AS WE REDEDICATE OURSELVES TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW SOCIETY." IN A RISING CRECENDO, HE CONTINUED, " WE MUST REFORM, WE MUST CUT OFF THE INFECTED PARTS OF OUR BODY BEFORE THEY WEAKEN THE WHOLE, I PLEDGE MYSELF TO THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE UNSWERVING AND UNCOMPROMISING PURSUIT OF OUR LOFTY GOALS AND WILL RISK THE ENMITY OF FRIENDS AND EVEN RELATIVES TO SEE THAT THE GAINS OF THE NEW SOCIETY ARE NOT LOST.

6. COMMENT: MARCOS' SPEECH WAS HIS SHARPEST CRITIQUE OF NEW SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND HARSHTEST STATEMENT ON CORRUPTION AND PRIVILEGE THUS FAR. AND FIRST TO MENTION, EVEN OBLIQUELY, POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF HIS RELATIVES. HIGH RANK AND POSITION OF SOME OF THE DEPOSED WERE A SURPRISE, ESPECIALLY UNDERSECY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE SALIENTES AND SECY OF PUBLIC WORKS CONSUNJI. THE IRREGULARITIES OF THE FORMER IN HIS FOREIGN ARMS PURCHASES AND THE WELL-KNOWN CONFLICT OF INTERESTS OF THE LATTER MADE THEIR INCLUSION LOGICAL WHILE THEIR POSITIONS MADE IT UNEXPECTED.

7. MARCOS' TOUGH TONE OF REFORM AND REORGANIZATION SOMEWHAT WEAKENED BY TOTAL ABSENCE FROM HIS LIST OF MALFEASORS AND OVERAGED RETIREES OF ANY MILITARY FIGURES. IT ALSO REMAINS TO BE SEEN, WHETHER REFORMS ANNOUNCED ARE CARRIED OUT OR WHETHER
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IN WELL-KNOWN PHILIPPINE WAY, THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT AND REMAIN THE ONLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS. NO DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT SPEECH HAD VERY DEFINITE SHOCK EFFECT. THIS VERY-UN-FILIPINE " PUBLIC EXECUTION" OF PROMINENT POLITICAL FIGURES, SOME OF WHOM, LIKE CONSUNJI AND SALIENTES, WERE SEATED ON THE PLATFORM WITH THE PRESIDENT, HAS INTRODUCED A NEW POLITICAL STYLE THAT MAY SEND A FEW SHIVERS THROUGH THE ELITE. END COMMENT

SULLIVAN

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